



**Division of Student Affairs  
International Student Services and Programs**

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Commissioner of Social Security  
P.O. Box 17703  
Baltimore, MD 21235-7703

RE: Proposed Rule regarding evidence requirements for assignment of Social Security numbers to foreign academic students in F-1 status.

Dear Commissioner:

In the last few weeks my international students who arrived to start classes in January have been prevented from opening bank accounts, getting telephone service or driver's licenses because they did not have Social Security cards. When I phoned the individual banks I was told all banks are now requiring a social security number before an account can be opened.

These students are in a catch 22, they have to take classes in order to remain in status, but they can't pay their tuition because they can't convert their funds by opening a bank account. You cannot begin to imagine all the barriers being thrown up in the name of documentation by SS#.

The new regulations simply will place additional stress on students while they are experiencing the culture shock of a totally new environment. Can't we wait until a more workable system is designed before changing the system? The last thing we want to do is make it impossible to get a legitimate, trackable number and end up encouraging massive fraud simply to get such basic services as a phone and a bank account.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mara Loeb  
Director, International Services